

Web Connected Organs

By Peter Coenders

Today, even electronic organs make use of the Internet. Usually this involves PC downloaded software upgrades. However, Wersi have gone a step further and have provided a new generation of organs with built-in Internet connectivity.

One of the best known suppliers of do-it-yourself electronic organs is the German firm Wersi. Particularly during the '70s and early '80s, Wersi's were very beautiful, and to a certain extent, affordable analogue organs. Models such as Helios and Galaxis have made a name for themselves. Around 1985 the first digital Wersi's became available. As a consequence of continuing miniaturisation of the electronics, the do-it-yourself aspect fell out of favour. In the early '90s Wersi introduced the CD series, with the Spectra and Atlantis as the top of the line models. This series made use of 16 bit sampling which ensured natural sound. One of the disadvantages however, was the limited polyphony. The Spectra with two keyboards and pedalboard provided a maximum of 32 voices (excluding rhythm), while the Atlantis with three keyboards plus pedalboard was capable of a maximum of 56 voices. At the time, this was not too bad, but was still rather limited when compared with analogue organs.

Up to last year, Wersi stuck to the CD theme, with beautiful instruments such as PhonX and Pegasus. Relatively unique, even among the most recent instruments (including keyboards and expanders), is the large LCD touch screen that makes for simple and convenient operation. When compared with magnificent instruments such as the analogue Galaxis, the number of buttons, touch switches and drawbars is greatly reduced, without reducing any of the capabilities. Also worth mentioning is that Wersi have



addressed the problem of limited polyphony. The most recent versions of the Pegasus are 64 note polyphonic.

Earlier this year, Wersi unveiled the latest series of instruments. Based on modern multimedia computer technology, supplemented with Wersi's own knowledge of musical instruments, a very remarkable series of instruments has been

created. It appears that the limitations of the CD series are gone. All organs and even the keyboard are 208 note polyphonic. These instruments also have real-time registration, something that has always been customary on analogue instruments. The new series consists of the models Abacus (keyboard), Vegas (portable organ), Monet, Da Vinci ('living room' organs) and the



top of the line Louvre with three keyboards and 25 note pedalboard. This product series is conspicuous

because of the large LCD colour touch screen. The keyboard is remarkable in the sense that it pos-

sesses real drawbars, following the example set by Hammond. Finally, Wersi have gone even further and have made it possible to provide each instrument from this series with a web connection. Using this, Wersi take a new step in the direction of sound and rhythm upgrades and possibly a certain amount of technical service. Reputable brands such as Yamaha and Roland have a similar approach, of course. These companies make their upgrades available in a database, accessible with a PC connected to the Internet. The file then needs to be copied from the PC to the instrument using a disk.

Even though these instruments have been displayed to the public on several occasions, they are not yet available. The expectation is that production will start soon.

Those readers who would like more information or a musical foretaste (from Yamaha) should visit the following web sites:

<http://www.wersi.net>

<http://www.yamaha.co.uk/>

<http://www.yamaha.co.jp/english/>

[product/pk/nonflash/products/psr9000/psr9000.htm](http://www.yamaha.co.jp/english/product/pk/nonflash/products/psr9000/psr9000.htm)

<http://www.rolandcorp.com/>

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